

DIRECTIONS

for the private reading
of the Scriptures;

Wherein besides the number of Chapters assigned to every day, the order and drift of the whole SCRIPTURES IS

Methodically set
Down — downe: *by*
And choice Rules (that shew how to reade with profit) are likewise given:

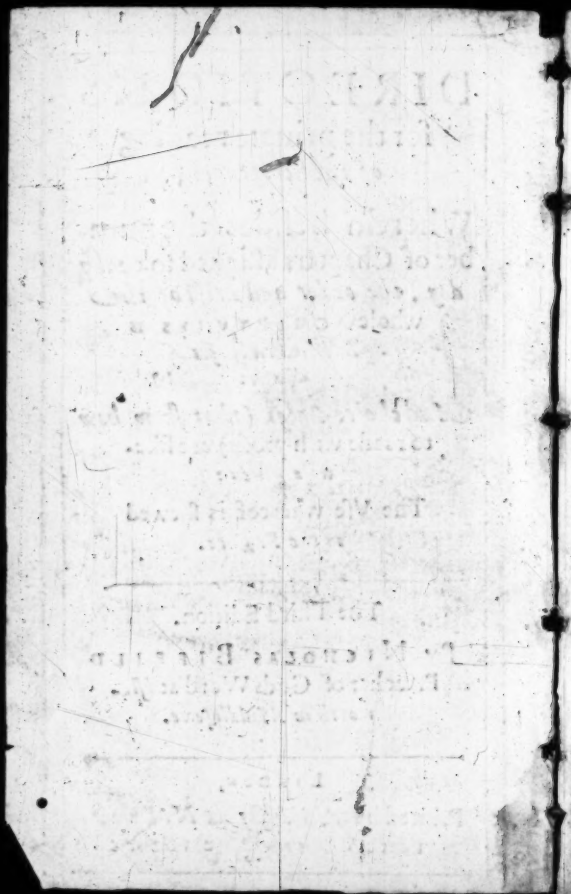
The Use whereof is shewed
in the Preface.

The Third Edition.

By NICHOLAS BIFFIELD
Preacher of Gods Word at Isle-
worth in Middlesex.

LONDON,

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neere S. Austens gate. 1626.





To the noble Knight,
Sir *Horrace Vere*, Generall of
the English-forces in the
Low-countries.

A N D

To the most worthy Lady, the *W*
Lady *MARY VERE* his
Wife, my most respected and
Religious Parishioners.

There are three things
incite me, to Dedi-
cate this little dire-
ction to your Lord-
ship and my Lady:
The first is to testifie hereby vnto
the World my vnfained estima-
tion of those sauing graces, and
the true Religion that dwels in
you both. The second is, to ex-

A 3

presse

The Epistle

preſſe hereby my great deſire to ſhew my thankfulneſs, for the many fauours I haue receiued, but eſpecially for all the encouragemētſ wherewith I haue been reſreſhed in obſeruing your loue to my Miniſterie, and care in your ſelues and your Family, to ſhew the profit of it. The third is, becauſe it pleaſed your Lordſhip and my Lady heretofore, to deſire and accept directions of this kind from me, in writing.

I haue beene the willinger to ſuffer this Copy to come into publike view, becauſe I haue bin vrged by many friends from diuers places of late, to giue them Directions of this kinde: and I haue long obſerued that in the moſt places the godly that are vnlearned, are at a great want of a ſetled courſe herein. If it may pleaſe your Lordſhippe and my Lady

Dedicatorie, &c.

Lady to afford this little Worke,
your acceptation & countenance,
I shall bee richly satisfied. My
hope is that the Lord that hath
as it were called for it by the re-
quest of many well disposed, will
be pleased to giue a blessing to it:
if any thing be now wanting, by
the intimation of my friends, I
may make further supply in after
Editions, if God will.

The Lord multiply grace and
ioy with righteousness and peace
in both your hearts and liues, and
prolōg with increase your Lord-
ships honour and good successe
in your Military calling, in which
you haue beene hitherto a special
ornament to this Nation. end
and rest,

Yours in the service of Mini-

stry to be commanded,

N. BIFFELD.

THE
OFFICE OF THE
SHERIFF OF THE COUNTY OF
SHERIFF'S OFFICE

IN REPLY TO YOUR LETTER OF
THE 10TH INSTANT, I HAVE
THE HONOR TO ACKNOWLEDGE
THE RECEIPT OF YOUR LETTER
OF THE 10TH INSTANT, AND
TO INFORM YOU THAT THE
SAME HAS BEEN FORWARDED
TO THE APPROPRIATE
AUTHORITIES FOR THEIR
CONSIDERATION.

I AM, SIR, VERY
RESPECTFULLY,
YOUR OBLIGED SERVANT,
J. B. [Signature]

THE
SHERIFF OF THE COUNTY OF

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THE PREFACE.

THese Directions for reading the Scriptures containe three things. First Analyticall Tables, concerning the order of the whole Scriptures, and the severall Bookes and Chapters gathered to this end, that the Reader might before hee reads, mark the drift of each Booke and Chapter, and when he hath read, might with singular ease and delight remember, what he hath read. The second is a Calendar, shewing what number of Chapters are to be read every day, that so the whole Bible might be read over in a yeare. The number of Chapters while you are

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reading the Old Testament, is for the most part three a day, and when you come to the New Testament, it is but two: Sometimes where the matter is Historicall, or Typicall, or the Chapters short, I haue set down a greater number. The third thing is the Rules for obseruation of profitable things in reading. Many complaine of their not profiting in reading, and some weake Christians afflict their hearts maruellously with griefe and feare, because they cannot reade with more comfort and profit, when the fault is not in their affection to the Word, so much as in their want of direction for their reading.

Concerning these Rules I consider both the matter, and manner of v-sing them. For the matter, hee that comes to read the Scriptures, should especially set himselfe to obserue two things: First, the most needfull pla-

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ees to enlarge his owne knowledge, and further his owne growth in the true grace of God. Secondly, such places, as might warrant his practise in the things, the World vsually cauls at and reprocheth his profession for: as if hee did not what were necessary to doe. There are some things in all places objected against the godly. Now it is a thing of admirable vse, in our reading to gather vnder the senerall heads such places as may establish our hearts with abundance of assurance, that we doe nothing out of precisenesse and curiositie in those things: but meerely at the commandement of God. And the Scriptures are so apparant, and easie to bee discerned, and so many in number, that the simplest Reader may gather great store of testimonies.

Now for the first of these, that is, such places as might most profit me

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in my particular reading: I would bring this minde to the Scriptures. (I will but gine a taste here.)

First, it were a thing of admirable use all my life long, if I did set downe all the places of Scripture, that in the reading I find sensible comfort and vanishing of heart in: It may be in the whole Bible I may find 20. 40. 50. &c. of such places, as I was faine in the reading did wonderfully fill my heart with secret refreshing, and sensible ioy: Now these places so noted, not onely serue for present use, but while I liue in any distresse, I may haue recourse to these, as so many Wells of ioy, and if in my griefe one, or two or tenne of them did not comfort mee: yet a thousand to one some of them will haue spirit and life in them to refresh me againe in any sorrowes: Besides, it maruellously establissh my faith,
when

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when I remember, in how many distinct places of Scripture the Lord was pleased to comfort me in particular. This is one thing now we should observe.

Secondly, would it not be exceeding profitable; if I did note all the places of Scripture which in reading of them did sensibly smite my heart, and reprove some fault in me, so as I felt my heart troubled within me? Certainly by that time I had gone through the Scriptures, I should see the Anatomy of my corruptions, and plainly perceive, what things there were in my nature, that God had a quarrell against: and so might bee guided by the very finger of God to know the faults, I should set my selfe most against in mortification.

Thirdly, in reading one shall find

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find sometimes certaine Rules or counsels giuen, which one sensibly is affected withall, and hath an inward desire, Oh that I could but remember this counsell of the Holy Ghost. Now I would note all those places, that the Holy Ghost made me in loue withall in the reading, that might concerne my own particular direction either at home, or abroad.

Againe, the most people in the midst of these extreme differences of opinions on all sides, feelee sometimes a wonderfull desire, such as this, O that I could tell but some certaine way what to beleue, and then let all the World contend, if they will: Now for this I would marke all those apparant places, that containe euident ground of truth, against which there can be in my conscience no cauill, but I
could

The Preface.

could live and die in the assurance,
that that is the will of God. It is in-
credible, how the simplest may ses-
tle themselves herein, in all the
fundamentall points of Religion. If
thou find of these but 20. 30. 40. or
50. places in the whole Bible; thou
canst not now beleene, how it will
settle thee: As for example, 1. Ioh.
5. he saith, There are three in ^m
Heaven, the Father, the Word,
and the Spirit, and these three
are one. All the World now should
neuer make me doubt of the Tri-
nitie in Vnitie. When I had gotten
those grounds, those I would sticke
to, & for other questions, let them
wrangle while they will, I would
receiue further light when I saw it
cleere; but their quarrelling should
not much trouble me. And thus I
might go on with the particulars
of the first sort of rules, but these
shall

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shall suffice to giue light to the
course.

Now for the second sort of Rules,
one may find in enery place certain
things, strongly objected against
the practice of the godly: As for
example, that they deserue to be ha-
ted, because they will not keep com-
pany with their Neighbour, and
because they stand so precisely vpon
small matters, as lesser oaths, and
doing slight works vpon the Sab-
bath day, and such like: and besides,
many men are afraid to enter vpon
such a course of life, because it is a
way so euill spoken of, and repro-
ched in the World, &c. Now for
my own establisshment I would mark
where my course differed from o-
ther men, and in reading I would
gather euident places, that might
warrant my practice: As for ex-
ample, places that iustifie the auoi-
ding

The Preface.

ding of the company of the wicked,
and so again, places that shew, that
the sincere practice of godlinesse
hath bin ever liable to the scornes,
reproches, & slanders of the world.
And so of the rest.

Now for the manner of using
these rules, I think, thou maist pro-
fitably follow these Directions. L
First, make thee a little paper book
of a sheet or two of paper, as may be
most portable: then write upon
the top of every leafe, the title for
that that thou wouldest obserue in
reading. Chuse out only six or eight
titles out of the whole number of
such as for the present thou hast
most need to obserue: or onely so
many as thou art sure thy memory
will easily carry to thy reading,
whether more or fewer. In reading
obserue onely such places as stare
thee in the face, that are so euident,
thy

The Preface.

shall suffice to give light to the course.

Now for the second sort of Rules, one may find in every place certain things, strongly objected against the practice of the godly: As for example, that they deserve to be hated, because they will not keep company with their Neighbours, and because they stand so precisely upon small matters, as lesser oaths, and doing slight works upon the Sabbath day, and such like: and besides; many men are afraid to enter upon such a course of life, because it is a way so evill spoken of, and reproched in the World, &c. Now for my own establishment I would mark where my course differed from other men, and in reading I would gather evident places, that might warrant my practice: As for example, places that instise the avoiding

The Preface.

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whether more or fewer. In reading
obserue onely such places as stare
thee in the face, that are so euident,
thy

The Preface.

thy heart cannot looke of them. Trouble not thy selfe with that objection, that there are many things which thou canst not discerne; take thou onely such as thou canst not passe ouer, they are so cleare and euident. In noting the places, set downe vnder each title onely the Booke, Chapter, and Verse, and not the words, for that will tire thee in the end. As for example, would I obserue all the hard places, which in reading I haue a desire to know the meaning of, that so when I come into the company of Preachers or able Christians, I might haue profitable questions to propound: I would set it downe thus.

Hard places;

Malach. 4. 5.

Malach. 2. 6.

And so of other places: for I giue these on the suddaine but for instance

The Preface.

stance sake. Now when thou hast done thy quarters taske, or thy yeares taske, then thou maist write out the choifest things, as thou thinkest good, and in the meane time hast the use of the places for turning to. And if thou shouldst in reading of thy selfe remeber some title, which thou hast not in this Direction, and yet hast a great desire to obserue places of that kind, by any means write it down, whilst thou thinkest of it, and custome in obseruing wil make thee able to be thine owne Directour hereafter. Look not at the profit of this course the first weeke, or month: but consider, how rich it will make thee at the yeares end. I am perswaded, if thou feare God, thou wouldst not sell thy Collections for a great price, after thou hast gathered them, if it were but for the good,
they

The Preface.

they may doe thee in the euill day,
when it shall come vpon thee.

Farewell, the Lord giue thee
a blessing, and pray thou for mee,
and remember before thou reade
to lift vp thy heart to God in some
short Eiaculations, to beg his blef-
sed assistance, and take heed thou
be not vnthankfull to God for the
successe.

By all meanes strive to keepe a
delight in thy course, and let not
thy heart be too apt to discourage-
ment: but reioyce in the Lord.

Againe farewell: the Lord
keepe thee till the day
of Christ.

T H E



The Order of the Bookes,
and of reading the whole
SCRIPTURES.



He Booke you are to
read is the Bible: your
Bible is diuided into
two parts, the old Te-
stament, and the New.

The old Testament containes the
Law and the Prophets.

The Law is expressed in the five
Bookes of *Moses*, called the *Penta-
tenche*.

The *Prophets* comprehend three
kinds of Writings.

1. History (principally) from *Io-
sua* to *Iob*, called the *anterior
Prophets*.
2. *Doctrines* (principally) from *Iob*
to *Esay*, called the *Hagiogra-
pha*.

3. *Pro-*

3 The order of the Bookes and

3. *Prophecie* specially taken (principally) from *Esay* to the end of *Malachy*, called the *posterior Prophets*.

The New Testament contains:

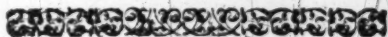
1. *History* (principally) in the foure *Euangelists*, & the *Acts*.
2. *Doctrine* (principally) in the *Epistles*.
3. *Prophecie* in the *Reuelation*.

That, which you are first then to reade, is the *Law* in the five Bookes of *Moses*: which Bookes intreat,

1. First, of the originall and state of the Church in the beginning (to whom the *Law* was giuen) in *Genesis*.
2. Secondly, of the promulgation or publication of the *Law*, which was giuen either generally, the Lawes *Ecclesiasticall* and *Politickall* together, and so in *Exod. 9.* or specially and apart, and so the Lawes *Ecclesiasticall* are giuen in *Leuiticus*, the Lawes *Politickall* are giuen in *Numbers*.
3. Thirdly,

of reading the Scriptures. 3

3. Thirdly, the repetition of the Law in *Deuteronomy*.



GENESIS.

IN *Genesis* you shall reade :

1. First, of the Creation of the Church, Chap. 1. 2. 3.
2. Secondly, of the constitution of the Church. From Chapter 4. to the end.

In the Creation obserue the making,

First, of the *World*, in which the Church was to liue, Chap. 1.

Secondly, of *Man*, of which it was to consist : in whom consider

His *happinesse*, in which hee was made, Chapter 2.

His *miserie*, into which hee fell, Chap. 3.

The constitution of the Church must be considered as it was in the two Worlds : the *old World* before the Flood, from Ch. 4. to 8. and the

now

4 *The order of the Booke and*
new World after the Flood, of which
Chap. 8. to the end of the Booke.

In the old World consider.

The propagation of sinne and
punishment, Chap. 4.

The cōseruation of the Church
Chap. 5.

The condemnation of that sin-
full World, foretold Chap. 6.

Executed, Chap. 7.

The story of the new World is con-
sidered chiefly in the Ages of foure
men; that is Noah to Chap. 12. A-
braham to Chap. 25. Iſaack to Chap.
28. and Iacob from Chap. 28. to the
end of the Booke.

In the History of Noah consider,
His deliuerance from the Deluge,
Chap. 8.

His blessing from God, Chap. 9.

His Family and Posterity.

As it was united, Chap. 10.

As it was dispersed through
the earth, Chap. 11, whereof
the election of a peculiar peo-
ple out of the rest to God, of
whom the Church consisted.

In

In the History of *Abraham* consider,

First, his vocation, Chap. 12. first part.

Secondly, his Peregrination both in *Egypt*, ch. 12 and in *Canaan*, ch. 13

Thirdly, his dealing :

First, with *Lot*, Chap. 14.

Secondly, with God : with God I say, who promised him issue, Chap. 15. gaue him issue of *Sarah*, Chap. 16. and makes his Couenant with him, Chap. 17. to 25.

About the Couenant obserue.

First, the forme of it, Chap. 17.

Secondly, the fruit of it.

First, on Gods part, which was shewed in the communication.

Of Counsels and secrets vnto him, Chap. 18.

Of Benefits in deliuering *Lot*, Chap. 19. In succouring the weaknesse of *Abraham*, Chap. 20. and giuing the promised Child, Chap. 21.

6 *The order of the Bookes and*

Secondly, on *Abrahams* part, who
is commended.

For the obedience of his faith,
Chap. 22.

For his humanitie, Chap. 23.

For his piety in disposing his
sonne in Marriage, Chap. 24.

Thus of *Abraham*.

The History of *Isaack* containes,

His kindred and issue, Chap. 25

His travels & troubles, Ch. 26.

His Prophecie concerning the
estate of the Church in the
Posterity of his two Sonnes,
Chap. 27.

Thus of *Isaack*.

The History of *Iacob* is diuided ac-
cording to his threefold peregrinati-
on.

1. Into *Mesopotamia*, where note.

His iourney thither, chap. 28

His arriuall and Marriage,
chap. 29.

His Riche: and Children,
chap. 30.

2. Into *Canaan*, where note

His

of reading the Scriptures. 7

His iourne, chap. 31.

His arrivall, where note

His *congresse* with *Eſau*,
chap. 32. 33.

His *progreſſe* with much
griefe and miſery, for there

The raviſhing of *Dina*,
chap. 34.

The death of *Rachell*,
chap. 35.

The ſelling of *Ioseph*,
chap. 37.

The inceſt of *Inda*, C. 38

3. Into *Egypt*, where conſider :

1. The going downe of his
children, and ſo went :

1. *Ioseph*, of whole afflictions
reade, chap. 39. and 40. and
Dignity and Preſerment,
chap. 41.

2. The other Brethren of
whom chap. 42 43. and 44

2. The going downe of *Iacob*
himſelfe, where conſider :

1. His ſending for, by *Ioseph*,
chap. 45.

B 2

3. His

His

8 *The order of the Bookes and*

2. His trauels thither. chap. 46

3. His abode there, where considers:

1. His conference with the King of *Egypt*, chap. 47.

2. His blessing of *Ioseph*, c. 48

3. His Prophecie concerning the Posteritie of his Sons, chap. 49.

4. His death and burial. ch. 50

March.

Genesis.

1:

1. 2. 3.

2.

4. 5. 6. 7.

3.

8. 9. 10. 11.

4.

12. 13. 14.

5.

15. 16. 17.

6.

18. 19. 20. 21.

7.

22. 23. 24.

8.

25. 26. 27.

9.

28. 29. 30.

10.

31. 32. 33.

11.

34. 35. 36. 37. 38.

12.

39. 40. 41.

13.

42. 43. 44. 45.

14.

46. 47. 48. 49. 50.

E X



EXODVS.

THe Booke of *Exodus* intreates of the giuing of the Law in generall, and so the Story intreates of two things:

First, of the deliuerance of the people of *Israel*, to whom God was to publish his Law, from Chap. 1. to Chap. 19.

Secondly, of the Lawes themselves, Chap. 19 to the end of the Booke.

In the Story of the deliuerance of the *Israelites*, consider:

1. The occasion of it.
2. The instrument, by whom it was effected.
3. The deliuerance it selfe.
4. The consequence of the deliuerance.

The occasion was the tyranny of the *Egyptians*, Chap. 1.

The instrument was *Moses*, concerning whom the Storie tels:

10 *The order of the Bookes and*

1. Of his birth, chap. 2.
2. Of his calling, chap. 3.
3. Of his assistant *Aaron*, chap. 4.
4. Of the speeches hee made to the King of *Egypt*, chap. 5. and 6.
5. Of the Signes and Wonders wrought in *Egypt*, these Signes were eyther :

Confirming Signes, chap. 7.

Or punishment Signes, euen 10 great Plagues vpon the *Egyptians*, chap. 8. 9. 10. 11.

The deliuerance it selfe, wherein consider:

1. Their departure out of *Egypt*, chap. 12.
2. The ratification of it by Signes and Obseruations, chap. 13.
3. Their passage through the Red Sea, chap. 14.
4. Their thanksgiving, chap. 15.

The consequents of the deliuerance were:

1. Provision of victuall and necessities, chap. 16.
2. Defence from enemies, chap. 17
3. Ad.

3. Administration of Iustice, ch. 18

Thus of the deliuerance of the people: the Lawes follow: The Law must be considered two wayes:

First, as it was giuen by God, chap. 19. to 31.

Secondly, as it was obeyed by the people, chap. 32. to the end.

In the giuing of the Law con-

1. The preparation, chap. 19.

2. The diuision; For God gaue them:

1. Morall Lawes, chap. 20.

2. Iudiciall Lawes, chap. 21. 23.

3. Ceremoniall Lawes, Chapters, 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31.

The obedience of the people must be considered either in respect.

1. Of the moral Law, where note

Their transgression, chap. 32.

Their Reconciliation with God, chap. 33.

The restitution of the Law, chap. 34.

1. Of the Ceremoniall Lawe wherein is set downe the Story of

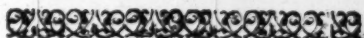
12 *The order of the Bookes and
the building of the Tabernacle;
Chap. 35. to the end of the Booke.*

March.

Exodus.

15.	1.2.3.
16.	4.5.6. ⁷
17.	7.8.9.10.11.
18.	12.13.14.
19.	15.16.17.
20.	18.19.20.
21.	21.22.23.
22.	24.25.26.27.
23.	28.29.30.31.
24.	32.33.34.
25.	35. to the end of the Booke.

L E-



LEVITICVS.

THe Booke called *Leuiticus* in-
treates :

First, of Sacrifices.

Secondly, of sacred Persons.

The Sacrifices must be considered,
eyther in respect :

First, of their *sorts*: Ch. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

Secondly, of the *rites* about them,
Chap. 6. 7.

The *sorts* of Sacrifices must bee
considered, as they were distingui-
shed either :

First by the matter, of which they
were, and so they were either :

Of living Creatures, Chap. 1.

Of things without life, Chap. 2.

Secondly, by the occasions, for
which they were, and these were ei-
ther :

Good things receiued from God,
Chap. 3. or:

B 5,

ECCL

14 *The order of the Bookes and*

Euill things done by man, Ch. 4. 5

Thus of Sacrifices.

The Persons are either :

Publike, of whom Chap. 8. to 11.

Private, Chap. 11. to the end.

The publike Persons were the Priests, concerning whom obserue :

First, their consecration to their Offices, Chap. 8.

Their execution of their Offices, Chap. 9.

Thirdly, their transgression in their Offices, Chap. 10.

The private Persons are considered in respect of their sanctification, and this sanctification was either,

Particular: of one man, Chap. 11. to 16. or

Commune of the whole Church, Chap. 16. to the end.

The sanctification of one man in particular is considered of, in respect of the wayes by which hee was polluted, as :

1. By eating, Chap. 11.

2. By Child-bearing, Chap. 12.

3. By

3. By Leprosie, Chap. 13. 14.

4. By Fluxe, Chap. 15.

The common sanctification of the whole Church is to bee considered:

First, in things necessary, Chap. 16. to 27.

2. In things voluntary, Chap. ult.

About things necessary, consider:

1. The Lawes, Chap. 16. to 26.

2. The obligation of them by Promises and threatnings, 26

The Lawes concerne either, Purification for their sinnes, Chap. 16. 17. Or

Information of their lives, Chap. 18. to 26.

The Purification was either,

Ordinary & annuall, Chap. 16

Or Extraordinary, Chap. 17.

The Lawes that concerned the information of their lives were either,

Oeconomicall about their Marriages, Chap. 18. Or

Politickall, about their carriage abroad with others, Chapters 19. 20. Or

Ec-

3. By

Ecclesiasticall, which Lawes con-
sidered either:

Persons, Chap. 21. Or

Things, Chap. 22. Or

Times, viz.

{ Dayes, Chap.
23. 24.
Yeares, Chap.
25.

March.

Leuiticus.

26.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

27.

6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

28.

11, 12, 13, 14, 15.

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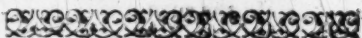
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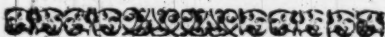
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ESAY.

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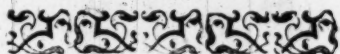
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HOSEA.

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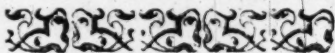
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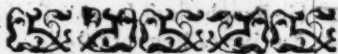
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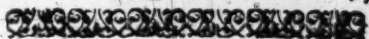
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IOHN.

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Rules

Rules , or Titles of things to be obserued in reading.

Places that in reading I found
sensible comfort in.

Places that in the reading of
them I found did rebuke corrup-
tion in my nature or practice.

Places that shew the priviled-
ges of the godly above all other
men.

Places that shew the affection
I should beare to God.

Places that shew mee how to
carrie my selfe in the Church.

Places that shew mee , how to
carrie my selfe in my Family.

Promises that may comfort me
against the burthen of my daily
infirmities.

Comforts against inward ten-
tations

rations and afflictions of spirit.

Promises to establish mee against the feare of falling away.

Promises that may comfort me against outward crosses.

Grounds or places that shew me diuers points of Religion, that I could infallibly rest vpon, and liue and die in the assurance of them.

Hard places that I would faine bee resolved for the meaning of them.

Comfortable places concerning Prayer.

Places that direct mee in my particular calling.

Places that shew mee, how to carry my selfe toward the wicked, especially when I must needs bee in their company.

Comforts against death.

Places that shew the glory of Heauen.

Places

Places that set out the terror
of Hell.

Choice Sentences to bee lear-
ned without booke.

Sentences for Children to
learn, briefly expressing the chiefe
points of Religion.

Places against Hypocrisie.

The most memorabile Sayings,
of the godly in their severall e-
states.

Places that in reading I thinke
might be wonderfull fit to com-
fort, or admonish, and direct such
and such a friend.

Miscellanea, or places I would
faine remember, but I know not so
what head to referre them

Rules of the second sort.

Places that instructe our way-
ing of worldly, yorvylgnaib
wicked men.

Places

Places that iustifie a precise respect of the least sinne.

Places that concerne the strict keeping of the Sabbath.

Places that shew, that the godly haue still beene reproched and slandered,

Places that shew, that we must be sorrow for our sinnes.

Places that shew, that the godly haue had all sorts of crosses.

Places that shew, that euen in the visible Church many times but a remnant shall be saued.

FINIS.
